



The Metro

Nikolay Nosov

Illustrated by I. Semyonov

Mummy, Vovka and me went to visit Aunty Olga in Moscow. The very first day Mummy and Aunty Olga went shopping and left me and Vovka at home. They gave us an old photograph album to look at. We looked at it for ages, until we got bored.

“We'll never see Moscow if we stay at home all the time,” said Vovka.

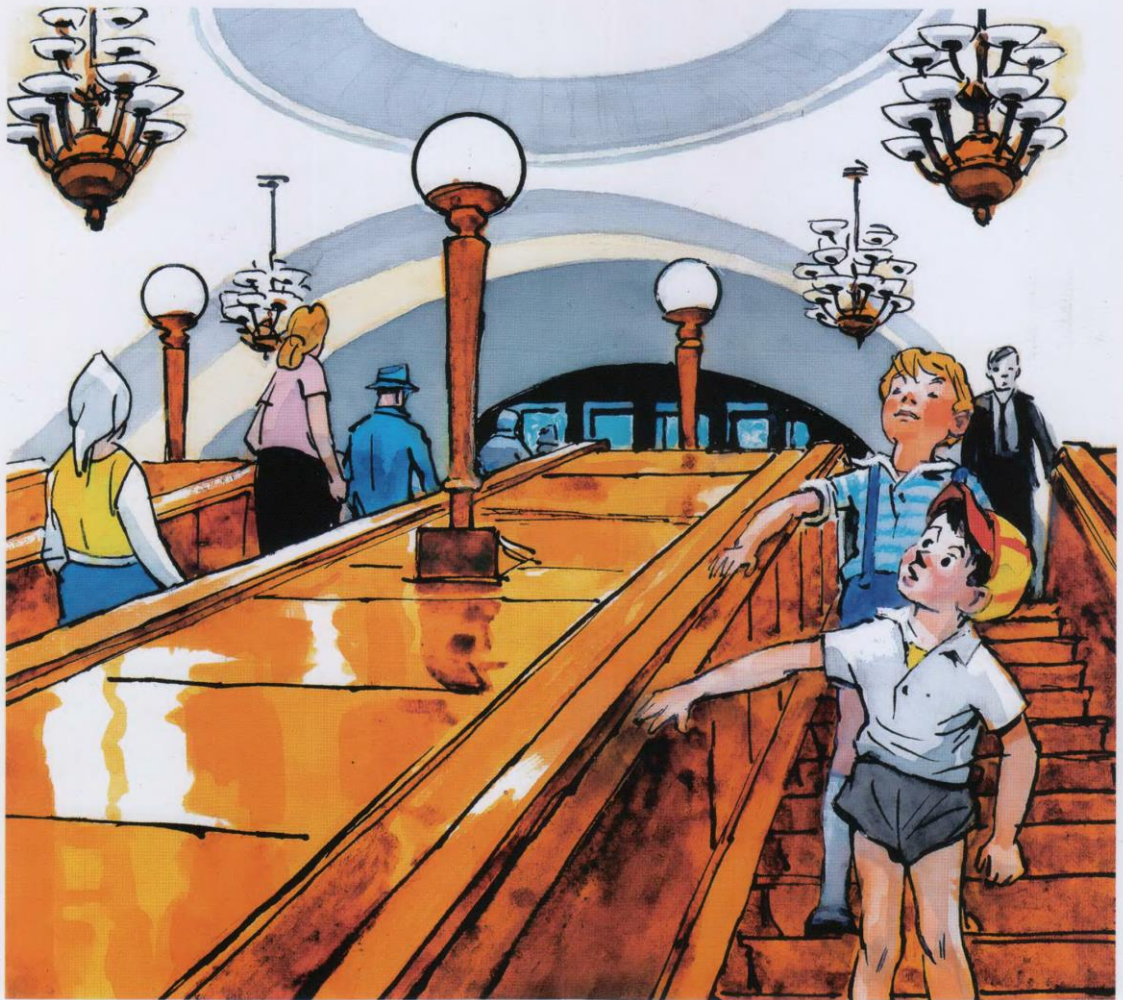
We looked out of the window. Outside was a Metro station.

“Let's go for a ride in the Metro,” I said.

We went into the station, bought some tickets and got on a train. At first we were a bit frightened, but then we began enjoying it. We went two stations and got out.

“We'll just have a look at this station, then go back,” we thought.

So we started looking round the station and suddenly saw a moving staircase with people going up and down it. So we went up and down too. You didn't need to walk, 'cos the staircase moved by itself.



When we'd had enough of that, we got on a train in the opposite direction.

We went for two stops then got out, but it wasn't our station!

"We must have come the wrong way," said Vovka.

So we got on another train and went back. But when we got out that wasn't our station either. We got frightened.

"We must ask someone," said Vovka.

"How can we? Do you know the name of the station where we got on?"

"No, do you?"

"No, I don't either."

"Then let's travel round all the stations. Perhaps we'll find it like that," said Vovka.

So we started travelling round the stations. We went round and round, until we got dizzy.

Vovka began to cry.

"Let's go out!"

"Where shall we go?"

"It doesn't matter. I want some fresh air."

"And what will you do up there?"

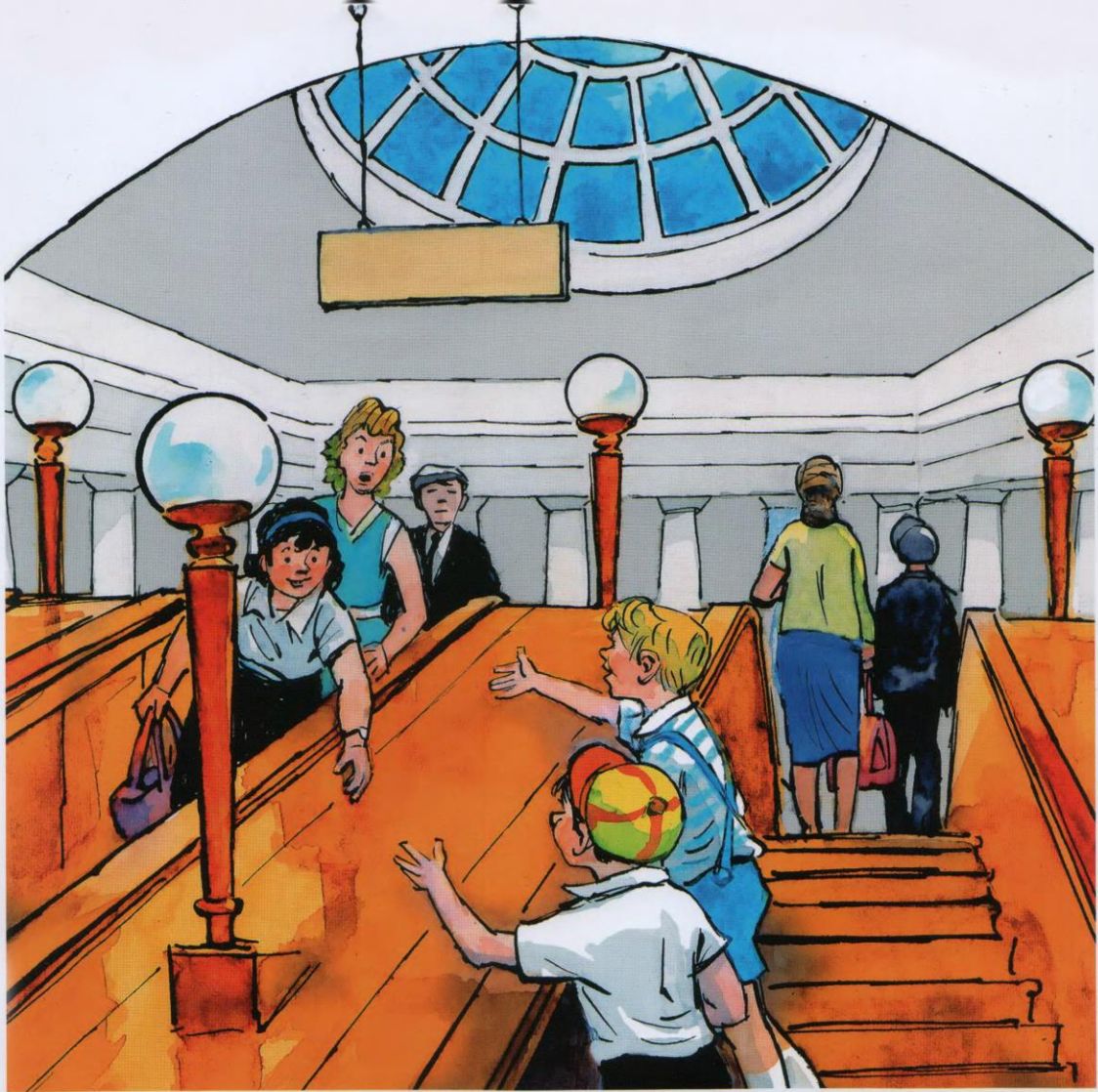
"I don't like being under the ground."

He began to howl.

"Don't cry," I said. "You'll get taken to the police station."

"I don't care! Boo-hoo-hoo!"





“Oh, alright, come on,” I said. “Only don’t cry. There’s a policeman looking at us.”

I grabbed his arm, got him onto a moving staircase and up we went. “I wonder where this will take us,” I thought. “What will happen to us now?” Suddenly we saw Mummy and Auntie Olga going down the moving staircase opposite.

“Mum!” I shouted with all my might.

They saw us and called out:

“What are you doing here?”

“We can’t get out of here!” we shouted back.

Before we had time to shout anything else, the staircases took us up and them down. We reached the top and hurried onto the staircase going down, where they had gone.

Suddenly we saw them coming up towards us.

"Where are you going?" they called. "Why didn't you wait for us at the top?"

"We followed you down!"

When we reached the bottom, I said to Vovka:

"Let's wait. They'll come down in a minute."

We waited for ages, but there was no sign of them.



“They must be waiting for us at the top,” said Vovka. “Let’s go up.”
No sooner had we started to go up, than we saw them coming down again.
“We got tired of waiting for you!” they shouted.
Everybody around us was tickled to death.
We reached the top, then hurried down again. This time we found them at last.

Mummy began to scold us for going out without asking, and we told her how we had lost our station.

“I don’t see how you could lose your station!” said Aunty Olga. “I travel on the Metro every day and I’ve never lost my station. Now then, let’s go home.”

We got on a train and off it went.

“You’re a couple of country bumpkins,” said Aunty Olga. “You go looking for your mittens when they’re tucked in your belt. You’ll lose the nose on your face, if you’re not careful.”

She teased us like that all the way.

When we got to the station, Aunty exclaimed:

“Well, I never! You’ve quite confused me! We need the Arbat, but this is Kursk Station. We’ve come the wrong way.”

So we got in another train and went back the other way. Aunty didn’t tease us anymore. Or call us country bumpkins.





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